

Hereford and South Herefordshire Green Party

Annual General Meeting 2018

Election Coordinator's Report

The main achievement in the last year has been a second by-election win. As everybody is probably aware, Ellie Chowns overturned a big Conservative majority to win the Bishops Frome and Cradley by-election at the end of 2017, bringing to 4 the Green group on Herefordshire Council.

2019 will be a key year for Herefordshire Greens, as it is a year with elections for the full Council. These happen only once every four years, so we need to make the most of the opportunity.

We have done a certain amount of preparation for this.

First, we have had extensive and rather prolonged discussion with some of the other opposition parties on the Council. The focus of these has been to try and ensure that we do not campaign directly against each other unnecessarily at the Council elections in May. It's Our County (IOC) have been very involved in these, the independents on the Council less so, and Labour and the Lib Dems have been luke-warm at best.

Discussions are continuing. The existing Conservative majority is very thin, so there is a real chance that the Council could become 'No Overall Control' which would allow far more representative decision-making on behalf of all people of Herefordshire. This target is providing a helpful focus for the discussions.

Second, we have taken our time to identify suitable candidates for our main target ward (Central) and a couple of other wards that might be secondary targets. Jeremy Milne will be our candidate in Central ward, Diana Toynbee and Natalia Wearing will be candidates in secondary targets.

We would like to identify suitable candidates to stand in some other wards as well, mainly as paper candidates – though if anybody is keen to target what looks like a potentially winnable ward where they live, please do let us know!

Third, Jeremy has taken the lead in starting to work in Central ward; initially this has taken the form of 60-second surveys which have generated some useful feedback, and we now need to build on this with some regular campaigning, and in particular making sure that we do plenty of canvassing, and also capture the data about voting intentions this gives us. The longer the run-up, the better our chances of winning a ward.

Fourth, importantly, together with North Herefordshire we have taken on a part-time worker, Helen, to help coordinate our campaigns. With four seats to defend, and several others to target, this is a really important role. She starts in October.

Finally, a plea. The single most important contributing factor to winning council elections is the number of volunteers, and the activity they can each put in. To maximise our chance of success it is vital that all party members put in whatever time and energy they can – the time between now and May should be a very busy one for us and we don't want to miss out on key targets for want of a little bit of effort. Please, please, please do help – it all makes a difference, whatever you can manage!

Prepared by: Edward Milford

October 2018

Nominating Officer & Electoral Returning Officer's Report

Diana Toynbee has been re-elected as the Hereford and South Herefordshire Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the Green Party.

Ballot papers were sent to all 128 local members as email attachments, by hand or by post in mid-August and had to be returned by 5 September. A total of 19 ballot papers were completed and returned in time, representing only 15% of our membership.

The votes were as follows:

Diana Toynbee: 19

Re-open nominations: 0